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Henri Temianka Correspondence; (leplin)

Sheldon Leplin

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Keywords

Henri Temianka, Sheldon Leplin, October 13, 1985, culture, virtuosity in musical performance, violinist, chamber music, camaraderie, recreation and entertainment, musical recordings, discontent, father, son

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October 13, 1985

Dear Mr. Temianka,

I moved to Los Angeles from Portland, Oregon about two months ago, and became aware of your Chamber Virtuosi when I heard your conversation as a guest on Luncheon at the Music Center. Although I was 12 years old in 1959, and am now 38 years old, I remembered your name at once from the Montalvo concert in which the Paganini Quartet performed one of my father's works. Incidentally, I have that performance on tape, in the event that you do not, and would like to hear it. I probably should have put it on the tape I left for you last night at Pepperdine; the reason I didn't can be attributed to fuzzy thinking.

I won't keep you in suspense about the reason for leaving you the tape and the articles about my father. I am at present the sole earthly representative for his music, and upon arriving in Los Angeles I discovered such a wealth of performing groups here, I decided there was no better time than the present to begin contacting people in order to see if I could drum up some performances. I do this for selfish reasons. I find my father's music to be endlessly fascinating. I hear it with fresh ears every time I listen, and I credit the music for delivering these novel experiences more than I credit my ears. I feel cheated knowing that most of his music is not available to me, and I think that others who did not happen to have him for their father, but who like 20th Century music, are also being robbed.

Unfortunately, I see nothing in his brochure which was written for the instrumental composition of your fine group, so that even if you felt like scheduling something of his at some point, I don't know what it could be. The small orchestra of his Three Dances for Small Orchestra contains both brass and woodwinds. I suppose the closest instrumentation is that of Rustic Dance for two pianos, horn and strings.

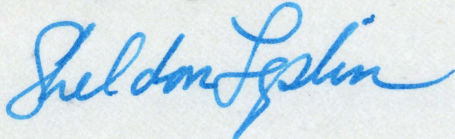
There is of course also the fact to be reckoned with that most of my father's music is far less accessible to the average concertgoing audience than that of composers who wrote in triadic harmony. However, sooner or later, room must be made for a more contemporary sound, not only for the sake of those who have created it, but also for the sake of the listener's capacity to grow.

Nothing of my father's has been performed since 1973. If you have any ideas of who might be interested, or if you at some time might see your way clear to performing something yourself, don't hesitate to get in touch. Also, if you wish to hear more of his music (or anyone else does), I have several more of his pieces on tape, including the first two Symphonies, the Classical Overture for Woodwind Quintet, and his delightful Five Sketches for Viola and Oboe, a piece in a much more lighthearted vein than some of the ones I gave you. I probably should have put it on the tape. (More fuzzy thinking.)

I enjoyed your concert very much, especially the piccolo concerto, and the Puccini, although I daresay that Puccini robbed his own piece of some of its haunting beauty by repeating the main theme so many times that the beauty of it lost its ability to haunt. (Where was I when Puccini needed me?)

I look forward to the next concert.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sheldon Leplin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent 'S' at the beginning.

Sheldon Leplin